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The Guide to Learning Series

LEARNING TO SALVAGE THE FRAGMENTS

Mayan Revelation Number 273

Monograph Three

Little Things are Important

Salvage Fragments of Energy

Salvage Fragments of Time

Salvage Fragments of Happiness



BELOVED PERFECTOR:

This Monograph is a Lesson which deals with little things - not with how to face big responsibilities, or to accomplish major tasks, but how to salvage the fragments of time that remain when most of the day is gone, and how to salvage something of value when life has been shattered.

Strange as it may seem, our happiness frequently springs from something very small. A baby's smile, or a friend's unexpected kindness can send ripples of joy into an otherwise drab day. On the other hand, someone's failure to show appreciation of what we have done, a long wait for a phone call which never comes, or a loved one's look of reproach, can destroy the peace and harmony we had achieved.

We live in an age which extols bigness. The largest state, the tallest building, and the wealthiest man attract our interest and receive our admiration. There is danger that we overlook the fact that LITTLE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT.

Advancement seldom comes in a big leap; more often it is achieved by ~~stepping over one obstacle after another.~~ Spiritual insight occasionally comes as a blinding flash of light; more often it is won by dispelling one doubt, then another. Victorious living depends in part upon how we do our daily work and how we respond to hours of crisis. It depends equally upon our ability to salvage fragments:

- . . . to use what energy remains when health is broken
- . . . to utilize scraps of time
- . . . to find satisfaction in brief moments of love
- . . . to wrest from disappointment something worthwhile.

As a single ray of light that creeps in by the edge of your window shade can drive darkness from your room, so a ray of hope, or a seed of knowledge, can spark a new life. Study this Lesson carefully. It will help you to salvage bits of energy, directing them into worthwhile channels. It will give instruction in the use of those chinks of time that are found between blocks of responsibility. It will outline ways by which you can redeem fragments of friendship, of family loyalty, and of personal happiness.

Approach this Lesson with an eagerness to discover how little things can contribute to a happy and a satisfying life. Join me now in the following PRAYER:

Dear Father, we thank Thee for the promise that whatever our need we can come to Thee. Protect us from false pride and self-glory. Save us from the folly of being blind to opportunities that are not great or spectacular. Help us to see the value in little things and to use

them to enrich and to strengthen our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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LITTLE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT

As children we were taught the adage: "What is worth doing at all is worth doing well." This proverb, which has been handed down from generation to generation, contains a germ of truth. But there is danger in pushing its principle too far.

By trial and error we have discovered that some tasks must be done quickly in order to leave time for more important things. A boy rakes the yard hurriedly so he will have time to play football. A student - if he is wise - does not spend too long perfecting the assignment for one class, or the next day he will find that he is unprepared for his other classes.

It is dangerous to worship the god called "100%". This warps one's personality. It robs life of joy, of friendship, and of love.

The eminent psychologist, Carl Jung, warned of the danger of allowing our lives to be shaped by a standard that demands perfection. He said: "The unhappy personality tends to follow the 'all or none' law: the thing must be perfect or he will have 'none' of it."

This point of view contributes to the current high rate of nervous tension and the illness it fosters. When a man thinks that all he does must be absolutely perfect, and all the orders that he gives must be carried out without the slightest margin of error, he becomes frustrated and worn when results do not measure up to his expectations. When parents think their offspring must excel in both scholastic and social life, their attitude is detrimental to their children's emotional health, as well as setting the stage for their own disappointment. The "all or none" obsession produces constant anxiety and unhappiness.

Recognize the fact that we are all imperfect. Strive to overcome your weaknesses and to improve your work, but also to find deep and abiding joy in making even small contributions, or in attaining moderate success. Take satisfaction in doing the best you can within your limitations.

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SALVAGE FRAGMENTS OF ENERGY

A friend came to me in a state of despondency. She cried out: "Why can't the doctors find something to relieve the pain in my eyes? Twice a week I'm supposed to use drops to control glaucoma. They help for only forty-eight hours. So for three days out of every week I suffer, and stumble, and feel completely useless. What can I do?"

The woman was under the care of one of the most skilled physicians in the state, so I presumed she was receiving all the medical help possible. I encouraged her to be patient during her difficult days, and when she was forced to

rest to fill her mind with pleasant thoughts. I suggested that she recall happy hours, and beautiful places that she had visited. I also urged her to recite poems she had memorized and the great passages from Scripture that she knew.

Then I tried to help her see that it was important for her to make the best use of her good days. By careful planning she could squeeze into four days almost as much that was worthwhile as she formerly had been putting into seven. Puttering and non-essentials would have to be eliminated. She would want to use times when her vision was clear to read those things that were worth recalling. She would want to store in her memory those verses and affirmations that would undergird her in difficult hours. She would need to salvage scraps of energy to do the little kindnesses that had always been one of the sources of great satisfaction to her.

As she followed this program the woman became more content. She still had good days, which were followed by poor days. When she was crippled or incapacitated by pain and blurred vision, of course she missed many activities she had formerly enjoyed. But she was able - even when suffering - to salvage fragments of joy as she firmly focused her attention upon thoughts that brought beauty before her closed eyes, and brought comfort to her mind. On days when she was better she made a real effort to wisely use her energy. Although in a week's time she was unable to do all the things she would have liked to have done, new peace stole into her heart as she learned to salvage the fragments of energy that were left to her.

Here, Beloved Perfector, is a principle we all should remember when illness, or gradually declining vigor, limits our activities.

DON'T WASTE TIME FRETTING OVER THE THINGS YOU CAN'T DO.

USE WFLLEVERY BIT OF ENERGY THAT YOU HAVE TODAY.

When you follow this practice, tensions will disappear. Unexpected satisfactions will come into your life. You will find that you are able to do far more than you surmised.

A severe heart attack made it necessary for a neighbor to be rushed to the hospital in an ambulance. The doctors ordered complete rest. For a week they would not even allow the man to feed himself. Then they told him to increase his activity bit by bit. First he was to move his fingers, then his hand. After a few more days he was permitted to sit up five minutes out of each hour. When he came home he was allowed to take just one step the first day, two steps on the second day, and to increase his steps just one at a time. When he had gained sufficient strength so he could return to his position on a half-time basis, his physician said to him: "If you don't feel overtired, get some moderate exercise every day. Use what strength you have and more will be given you."

USE WHAT STRENGTH YOU HAVE AND MORE WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU. At times your supply of energy may be very small, but use every fragment of it. Use it because it is too precious to waste. Use it because new life will pour into your mind and body as you wisely invest all the physical and mental resources that you have.

SALVAGE FRAGMENTS OF TIME

If we would live full and satisfying lives we must learn to salvage not only the fragments of our energy, but the fragments of our time. This is not always easy. The responsibility for specific tasks crowd our days. Those of us who are serious minded frequently tend to be overconscientious, and all too often do our work well, only to be haunted by the realization that we are missing the things we most deeply desire.

A young man was employed by a chemical company; and by hard work he gradually won promotion to the office of vice-president. His salary was good, but his labors gave him meager satisfactions. He longed to be outdoors, and to be a leader of youth. This became known in the community where he lived, and when a new Boy Scout director was needed, this man was offered the opening. The position would pay only two-thirds of his former salary, and he would still be required to spend many hours a week in an office. The question the man faced was: "Shall I accept this new responsibility that will permit me to devote some time to the work which brings me great satisfaction, or shall I wait for a more favorable opportunity?"

You may face a question like this. There is the temptation to delay because the perfect opportunity has not come. This question arises not only in regard to full time employment, but also to volunteer service, and even to the hobby you would like to pursue. In each case, endeavor to intelligently evaluate what lies ahead, and then decide what is the most rewarding use of your time.

Most of us will have to make the best of the situation in which we find ourselves. Let us seek for small ways by which - while faithfully fulfilling our work responsibilities - we can render the services and gain the satisfactions that will contribute to our happiness.

Revitalize your life by using fragments of time for study, meditation, and prayer. Too often you may squander five minutes, or ten, because you think the span of time available is of little value. Sometimes you waste time because you neglected to put close at hand the book or the tools that you need.

Think of this day, for example. Perhaps you awoke several minutes before it was time for you to arise. If so, I hope you did not waste those first waking moments, for they can put you in the right frame of mind to meet the challenges that the rest of the day will bring.

Even if you have only two minutes between the time you awake and the time you must arise, use that time to seek God's guidance and strength. Quiet your mind. Evaluate the activities that you have planned. If they are so numerous that the very thought of them makes you feel hurried and nervous, rearrange your schedule. On the other hand, if your day appears empty plan to put worthwhile activities into the hours before you.

Consider next the fragments of time spent in transportation. If these are on a plane, or train, or bus, plan to use them for study. Even when the jolting makes sustained reading impossible, you can read a few words of the subject you wish to master, and then hold this idea in your mind until it becomes firmly fixed in your memory.

A wide range of subjects can be covered in this way. You might concentrate upon the names and special interests of the people whom you are to meet. There may be information you want to have at the tip of your tongue. This can be mastered in time which too many people waste. While in transit you can glean spiritual insight by devotional reading and meditation.

To a more limited degree it is possible to do this while travelling by car, especially where the traffic is not heavy. Of course you must put safety first. But if before you start you will go over the names or the information that you wish to master, you can fix these firmly in your mind while you are on the road. A red light provides a brief moment to pick up the one fact that you have difficulty in recalling.

God has made us so that we can - in many situations - do two things at once. The housewife can knit while watching television. She can learn a new language while doing dishes. There are many ways for both men and women to salvage the time that must be given to routine tasks.

In every day there are brief intervals of free time. The person who spends the day at home always finds a few of these moments. Many factories and offices now offer a coffee break.

A change of pace stimulates the intellect. Nourishment of the body steps up a person's ability to concentrate, or to do creative planning. Food for the mind and soul also does this.

I know of two successful business executives who use the time set aside for a coffee break as an opportunity for Bible reading, meditation, and prayer. Both say that this practice increases their efficiency. Their problems appear less formidable when they have taken fifteen minutes to quiet their minds and think of eternal truths.

You can achieve poise and inner calm, even when the pressure upon you is great, if you will set aside brief moments during the day to still your mind and to gain perspective. Tap the divine source of Power not just once or twice a day, but frequently. When you can't spare fifteen minutes for study or silent meditation, take five minutes, or even two minutes. Go into a quiet room, if this is possible. Or shut your eyes for a moment, praying and repeating your affirmations. Or just draw a mental curtain to shut out distractions. At first you may find it difficult to secure a sense of apart-ness when there is commotion about you, but, if necessary, this can be achieved.

Far too many people become tense and neurotic because they fail to take frequent moments of relaxation. They rush through every lunch hour, and take their problems home to share with the family, or to disturb their evenings. They always are distraught; while others with equal responsibilities maintain balance and inner calm because they have established the practice of frequently renewing their strength through brief periods of prayer.

Resolve that you will not be a person who is scatterbrained and nervous. Keep your eyes focused on eternal values. Maintain your serenity and poise by utilizing fragments of time to seek for divine direction and undergirding.

Finally, be sure that the last waking moments of your day are filled with

pleasant and constructive thoughts. If you have problems to solve, leave them until tomorrow. If you are troubled by guilt, ask God for forgiveness. Approach sleep with a happy, contented mind.

The last fragment of the day may well be spent in reading that inspires confidence. Fill your mind with thoughts that are worth storing in the subconscious. Thank God for His goodness. Lose your littleness in His greatness. Rest well, knowing that you are surrounded by His love and care.

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SALVAGE FRAGMENTS OF HAPPINESS

This section of our Lesson will be of special help to those who are now facing discouragement, or sorrow. It presents, however, fundamental principles that we all need to grasp in order that we may be better prepared for adversity, and in order that we who are advanced students of Mayanry can help those who are struggling to surmount grief, or disappointment.

One moment life may be beautiful. Then our happiness may be shattered by economic reversals, or by the death of a loved one. In such a situation it takes courage for us to pick up the pieces that are left and to begin again. When we think all is lost, it is important for us to evaluate our personal assets.

Mrs. B. had married young and had become the slave of her husband and her children. On the day Mr. B. died she felt both helpless and useless. She could not drive a car. She had become careless in her dress, and she thought of herself as unattractive. Her eldest child would soon graduate from high school and no longer need her. While she did not actually contemplate suicide, she would have liked to escape from life.

Fortunately, a friend who was a Mayan took an interest in Mrs. B. She encouraged her to study how to gain mastery of herself. She prayed with her. She supported Mrs. B. by going with her as she registered for driver's training and shopped for more attractive clothes.

The one who had been despondent became a new person. Soon she was able to go shopping or to social events by herself, and to enter into conversation without constant reference to her grief. While she may never again know the complete happiness that once was hers, she is beginning to find some treasures hidden in the life which seemed to contain only rubble. This was made possible because a friend helped her to see her own worth and to recognize that God would give her new happiness when she sought for it.

It is quite probable that there will come a time when you must endeavor to pick up the pieces after life has been broken by illness, misfortune, or sorrow.

Another major cause of anguish is misunderstanding. Any pastor, psychiatrist, or counselor is appalled by the number of people who are utterly miserable because the one they once loved does not treat them fairly. Earlier in this Lesson we mentioned that if one worships the god of "100%" he may torture himself by magnifying his own failures. It is just as disastrous for a man to expect his

wife - or for a wife to expect her husband - to measure up to standards that are far beyond the person's capabilities.

How many homes would be saved if both parties would look for each other's good qualities! Perhaps marriage hasn't proved to be the idyllic state the couple dreamed it would be. Perhaps the happiness that comes from living together is far from 100%. Still there may be more comfort and joy possible than is imagined. This can be found if each one will do the little things that bring pleasure to the other.

The gulf between parents and children sometimes grows wider and wider until it seems impossible to bridge it. While often it is futile by a single word or deed to restore the old closeness, a succession of small kindnesses and words of praise can gradually build an avenue of communication and renew some measure of filial affection.

One of the practical contributions that Christianity makes to our daily lives is its teaching that simple little things are important. Jesus stressed this again and again. He spoke of sparrows, of lilies, and of the woman who left her work to search for a single coin that was lost. From the Master's teachings we gain the assurance that God cares for each one of us. We also see that happiness does not depend so much upon successes or material possessions as upon fragile things like a kindly word, a noble thought, and a loving deed.

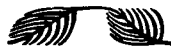
Remember:

LITTLE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT.

SALVAGE FRAGMENTS OF ENERGY AND YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WILL BE DOUBLED.

SALVAGE FRAGMENTS OF TIME. USE THEM TO GAIN PEACE OF MIND, AS WELL AS TO INCREASE YOUR EFFICIENCY.

SALVAGE FRAGMENTS OF HAPPINESS. COUNT YOUR ASSETS. STRENGTHEN FRIENDSHIPS AND FAMILY LOYALTY. DAY BY DAY TAKE ENJOYMENT IN HUMBLE PLEASURES. BY A SUCCESSION OF KINDLY WORDS AND LOVING DEEDS PROMOTE JOY AND UNDERSTANDING.



AFFIRMATION

Today I will salvage every scrap of time and energy I have. In small ways I will bring happiness to myself and to all whom I meet.

Blessings,

YOUR INSTRUCTOR.